



Tactical Talk

Volume 14, Issue 12

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"Taking my gun away because I might shoot someone is like cutting my tongue out because I might yell 'Fire!' in a crowded theater."

-- Peter Venetoklis

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Home at Last!

2010 was a very busy year for Tom & Lynn Givens on the road. We taught classes in Harrisburg, PA; Culpeper, VA; McLoud, OK; Baton Rouge, LA; Manchester, TN; Oklahoma City, OK;

Dallas, TX; Tulsa, OK; Austin, TX; Birmingham, AL; Woodbury, GA; and probably some places we've forgotten about.

We met a lot of great people and got to visit with a number of old friends. 2011 starts with the SHOT Show in Las Vegas in January, then a new run of road classes starting in March.



If you would like to host a Rangemaster class in your area in 2011, contact Tom at rangemaster.tom@gmail.com.

Advanced Firearms Instructor Course

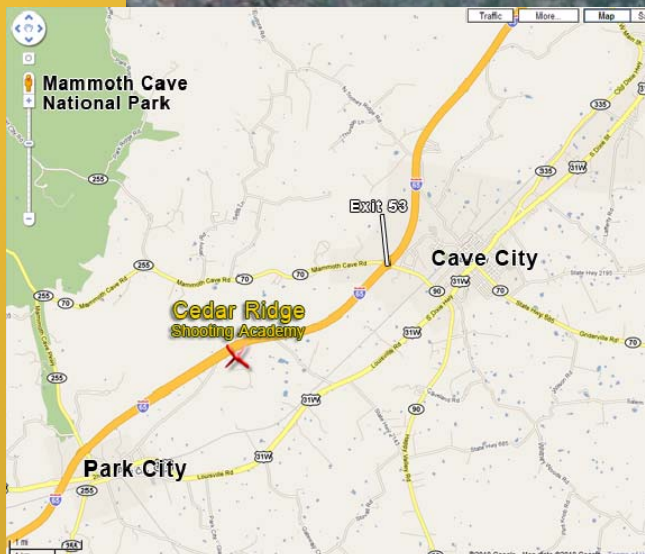
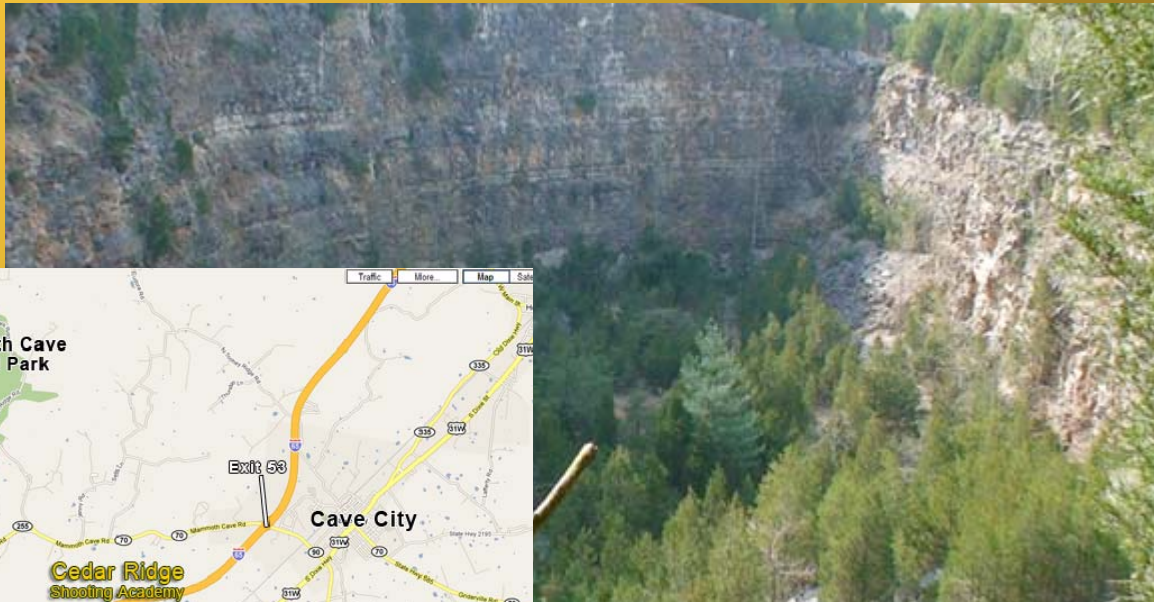
We will be conducting our Advanced Firearms Instructor Course on February 26-27, 2011. This is a two-day, Saturday-Sunday course, running from 9:00am to about 6:00 pm both days. Students fire about 750 rounds over two days. Topics covered include course design, target selection, scoring/testing methods, range first aid, and other subjects. The shooting drills concentrate on learning to hit reliably at higher speed. Cost is only \$269, which is dirt cheap for two full days of intensive instruction. You **MUST** be a prior graduate of Rangemaster's Three-Day Firearms Instructor Development & Certification Course to attend this course. This is a great way to get your continuing education credits for your state license.

Tactical Conferences, 2011

The Rangemaster Tactical Conferences have become some of the most important training events on the national circuit. We held two events in 2010- the Tactical Conference in Tulsa, OK, and new this year, the Mid-Atlantic Tactical Conference in Culpeper, VA. Both events were a huge success. We decided to hold two such events, one in the East and one in the West to maximize the opportunity for people all over the US to participate.



The Tactical Conference and Polite Society Tactical Match will again be held at the fabulous, modern facilities of the United States Shooting Academy in Tulsa, OK. USSA is the largest and finest firearms training facility in the US, and we take advantage of the 360 degree Shoot-House and the multiple ranges for our event. The dates are May 14-15, 2011. This event fills well in advance, so register soon.



The Eastern Tactical Conference moves to Cave City, KY, for 2011. The Cedar Ridge Shooting Academy in Cave City is a brand new, very nice training facility, with modern class-

rooms and multiple ranges. The range complex is nestled in beautiful hills just outside Mammoth Cave National Park. There is horseback riding, canoeing, cave tours, zip lines, and all sorts of activities for non-shooting members of your family. Cave City is about an hour Southeast of Louisville, KY, and an hour and a half North of Nashville, TN. The dates are 8-9 October 2011.



Rangemaster
 2611 S. Mendenhall Rd.
 Memphis, TN 38115



Phone – (901)370-5600
 Fax – (901)370-5699

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On Oct 29-31, 2010, Rangemaster conducted a Three-Day Firearms Instructor Development & Certification Course at the excellent Oklahoma City Gun Club, just outside Oklahoma City. We had students from Oklahoma, Kansas, Texas, and Tennessee, including seven law enforcement officers, a federal violent crimes prosecutor, a military contractor, a nurse, and a number of ordinary folks. The classroom and range facilities were top notch, and we had a great three days of training. Here is a review written by one of the students, a very experienced shooter:

“ AAR- Tom Givens/Rangemaster's-Three Day Firearms Instructor Certification Course, 29-31 October 2010, Friday-Sunday, 9 am to 6 pm each day.

Instructors: Primary-Tom Givens. Tom was assisted by his wife Lynn Givens; the class host, Spencer Keepers; and Greg Nurse. Both Spencer and Greg are prior graduates of this course.



Intro: I feel compelled to write this review for those who find themselves on the fence re taking a class from Tom Givens in particular and others in general. My only goal was to hone a knowledge/skill base that will, with perfect practice, allow me to better teach the running of a pistol at an increased speed, with acceptable accuracy and unconscious competence. This was my second Tom Givens

class per se though I have attended his Tactical Conference in Tulsa for the last two years. I have taken handgun classes at Thunder Ranch, Gunsite, APT, with Todd Louis Green and rifle classes with EAG (Pat Rogers) and the Kansas City Police Department. I have trained with a plethora of agents and agencies in both my personal and professional capacities. I am also an NRA Certified Pistol Instructor.

Venue: The Oklahoma City Gun Club (immediately east of Edmond right off of I-35). The OKC Gun Club is a complex with a series of dedicated shooting areas roughly divided by platform. We shot in an area that is often set aside for cowboy action shooting. We had an outdoor 25+ meter range. There was off road parking, a modern climate controlled classroom with real bath room facilities all within 10 meters of the range, classroom and parking. The weather was essentially the same each day, the mornings were cool at 40ish and the afternoons were pleasant at 70ish.

Class Format: There were approximately 20 students in the class. Each student was

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paired with another who observed and “taught” while his partner was on the line shooting. With the change of the relays, the roles were reversed. Given the stated goal of the class--instructor development, the 24+ hours of instruction were evenly divided between range time and class time. Tom lectured, incorporated power point driven materials and provided access to a variety of pistols for familiarization. Moreover given the fully disclosed shooting test, closed book written exam and required oral presentation, the bulk of Friday and Saturday night after class were spend studying and preparing to teach a lesson that your team (4 persons total, your partner and another set of students) would do on Sunday. Tom also touched on some of his students’ shooting incidents (56+)students have used their firearms in self defense and/or defense of others in the last 14-15 yrs with great success..



Class Strengths: My training goal was met. I was given the tools to better teach one how to run the platform at an improved level. Drills and lessons taught included: safety, presentation, stance, grip, sight picture/alignment diagnostics, accuracy diagnostics, speed diagnostics, trigger management at a variety of speeds vis-a-vis the accuracy standard desired and distance from the target, support hand only, strong hand only, movement “off the x”, reloads, malfunctions and multiple targets. Particular attention was paid to moving off the x in the 0-7 yd range when presenting, reloading and fixing malfunctions. It should be noted that the overall shooting skill level of the class was quite high and all passed with the required 90% plus score on the latest FBI qualification test which includes kneeling and prone shots taken from the 25. Tom uses this test as the baseline given its international recognition. Tom also administered other Rangemaster developed courses of fire which tend to be even more demanding in terms of the accuracy and time requirements.

The teaching approach was that of building blocks, first the accuracy, then some speed, while increasing the distance and increasing/shrinking the target size as appropriate. Tom did an excellent job keeping the targetry fresh by constantly rotating various paper targets with distinct target areas. The “Furbie” target with its distinct eye set and number/shape sub targets was very helpful. Tom stressed that we perform all non shooting tasks quickly to maximize the time we could have to make quality shots. Of course you have more time to slow down to get the hits if you have a quick and quality presentation coupled with sound manipulation skills. This point was driven home by Tom whenever appropriate to the drill.

The instruction was excellent. Tom demonstrated every drill to standard. There were a number of graded shooting exercises that validated Tom’s teaching approach. Tom shot enough to show that he can really shoot without it being a distraction. He was exceptional

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in working the line and offering just the right mix of earned praise with suggestions to improve. Tom has an keen eye. As such, he offers mechanical “tweaks” i.e. trigger finger and /or thumb placement that , when applied, paid immediate accuracy dividends. Lynn Givens is also gifted in this realm and really cleaned up the presentation on a few students whose scores literally skyrocketed from the first drill on Friday to the final shooting test on Sunday.



I mean this with the utmost respect-Tom has an “answer” for everything he teaches. You may not like or agree with the “answer”, but it is clear that Tom has thought long and hard about his teaching approach, material and methodology. When asking a question, you will get a full explanation as opposed to a “because I said so” answer. Tom was very approachable during and after class. Tom is a gifted, no nonsense instructor with exceptional grounding in the Modern Technique and his own development of firearm based martial arts as time, equipment and techniques continue to evolve and change for the better.

Class Development: I would have liked to have had more timed exercises and perhaps even a bit of man on man competition. Some application of the techniques in a lower light setting would have been great as well. I recognize that time and safety concerns could impact my desires.

Pistols: I ran both a Glock 34 and a 35 that had stippled by me. They both have Ameriglo Pro Operator Sights with .125 wide green tritium fronts and .180 wide rear with the smaller, yellow lamps. The front sights were quick to acquire.

Ammo: .40 cal- 180 CCI TMJ, 9mm- 147 Winchester Ranger FMJ and some hand loads (124 Berry Flat Point over 4.3g of Win 231.) I shot around 900 rounds total, evenly divided between those three loads. I appreciated an accurate round count estimate on the front end of the course and I always like it when we can shoot a bit more.

Lubrication: the pistol got a quick cleaning the night before the class. I used lithium bearing grease on it with excellent results. **Stoppages:** I had no stoppages whatsoever.

Eyepro: Oakley M Frame, VR-28 lense over my new contact prescription. This works well for me so long as I was diligent about using eye drops at the beginning of the day and right after lunch.

Gear: I used the Custom Carry Concepts AIWB Shaggy with two OWB mag pouches on a Wilderness 5 stitch 1.75 CSM belt. My concealment garments were untucked wicking t-

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shirt from Old Navy, Wal-Mart and Target coupled with an old piece of Land's End Fleece. The set up was fast, secure and warm/cool as appropriate. I am firmly convinced that Old Navy, Wal-Mart and Target brand wicking t-shirts perform at an 80%-90% level when compared to UnderArmour at about 1/3 the price. Notably, myself and one other individual shot the entire class from concealment. He too was carrying AIWB.

Magazines: Gen 8 G35 15 round mags & Gen 6 G34 17 round mags. I always downloaded the mags one round to make reloads a bit more positive. I had zero problems with them falling free though I did take the time before class to test that and "true" a few of them by the judicious application of a sanding block around the lower mag catch area.. Those that failed to fall free were sold over the weekend with full disclosure. Mags are consumables and should be treated as such. Given how dusty/dirty they got as nearly every reload in the class was a speed reload, I suspect I am going to fully disassemble, clean and make these dedicated training magazines.

Bottom Line: I cannot stress how important it is to get quality weapons training. Owning a weapon does not mean you can run it anymore than owning a guitar makes you musician. I was able to get quality training within 6 hours drive time of my home with a highly respected instructor whose methods are clearly successful. In short, we talked about what to teach, we talked about how to teach it, Tom taught it. Tom showed us how it was to be done. We practiced it until we too could do it and then we were tested over the techniques.

Final Thoughts: I am excited to train with Tom Givens in the future. The OKC Gun Club provided a quality training environment both in terms of the range and the class room facilities.. Thank you to all for making this class possible. Finally, I would be remiss if I did not give Spencer Keepers big kudos for his continued efforts at bringing quality instruction to the central Oklahoma area."



Training Summary: Shooting Through Automobile Glass

Unfortunately, lethal assaults by criminals in automobiles are quite common. If you are forced to return fire at an armed criminal who is inside a vehicle, you may have to shoot through glass surfaces. You need to know how this will affect the trajectory of your bullets.

SIDE AND REAR WINDOWS- These are made of tempered glass. During manufacture, tempered glass is heated to very high temperatures, then cooled rapidly. This process hardens the glass and makes it far stronger than similar untempered glass. This allows the glass to withstand common impacts like tire-thrown pebbles, hail stones, etc. This type of glass is also commonly called “safety glass”. When broken, it shatters into thousands of tiny, usually rectangular pieces, rather than sharp shards of glass.

When hit by a bullet, tempered glass side windows normally break into tiny pieces and fall from the window frame on the first shot. This applies to rounds fired into, or from inside the vehicle. An exception occurs when windows have been tinted. The tint is a plastic film covering the glass. This plastic film will sometimes prevent the shattered glass from falling out of the frame. Be prepared for that.

Rear windows are much larger and stronger. A single hit will often result in a hole, with “spider web” fractures around it. It may take several handgun bullets to knock out a rear window.

FRONT WINDSHIELD- The windshield of a car presents a very different circumstance. Windshields are laminated glass. During manufacture, a thin sheet of plastic is placed between two sheets of glass, then laminated under high heat and pressure. Pistol bullets make holes in windshields, if powerful enough to penetrate them and the angle is not too great.

Laminated glass is very tough and the windshield is “raked” or angled sharply. This creates some problems for your handgun bullets. Pistol fire can be deflected by laminated glass, causing anything from a slightly off course flight path to a ricochet completely off target.

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FROM THE OUTSIDE, SHOOTING IN- If firing into windshield glass at pretty much a 90 degree angle, from outside the vehicle, your bullet will typically deflect downward. In the distance from the windshield to the front seat, the bullet will generally strike 4" to 6" lower than your aiming point. The

"rake" of the glass causes more drag on the lower part of the bullet, causing it to deflect downward. If you aim at the upper chest of a person sitting in the front seat, odds are the bullet will be deflected downward enough to strike the steering wheel and the dash, and be further deflected or stopped. Thus, to achieve an upper chest hit, your aiming point should be the attacker's face or neck area.



FROM THE INSIDE, SHOOTING OUT- If you must fire at an assailant in front of your car, firing from inside the vehicle, remember that your rounds will be deflected by the drag of the glass, but in the opposite direction. The further back from the glass your gun is, the more deflection will occur. Also, the further back your muzzle is from the glass, the more tiny fragments of glass will be blown back into the passenger compartment. This is a serious issue, as this high velocity glass can blind you or a passenger.

To remedy this, place the muzzle of your gun right up to the glass. Be careful not to push your slide back out of battery, preventing the gun from firing. Light muzzle contact is ideal. This prevents deflection of the bullet, and prevents blow-back of glass particles into the passenger compartment. After a couple of shots, you will have an aperture in the glass you can extend the muzzle through, if more shooting is required.

FROM OUTSIDE, RICOCHETS- Laminated glass is very resistant to gunfire that impacts from any angle greater than about 25 degrees from straight on. Bullets fired at greater angles will quite often skip off the glass without entering the vehicle at all. These ricochets will still have a lot of velocity and are stray rounds. If you cannot get a fairly straight shot into a windshield, you would be well advised to hold your fire.

Tom Givens of Rangemaster – 3 Day Defensive Handgun review by a student named Paul

I was privileged to attend my third class with Rangemaster in the form of a three day Defensive Handgun class near Baton Rouge, LA. As usual, the class was very well run, full of great content, and everyone left with a tremendous exposure to the practical application of self defense with a firearm.

The attendees of this class were a diverse group ranging from training junkies to people with very little formal training. Nonetheless, Tom provided a class that advanced everyone and provided insight as to where everyone needed to focus their skills.



A relay at the ready

around carrying a gun, not figure out if you can find a gun that happens to coincide with your fashion sensibilities.

The format of the class transitions back and forth between the classroom and the range. On the range, we begin some basic drills to determine what students are where, how equipment is working, and so forth. Once all that is sorted out, we get to the real work.

I've trained with several "big name" schools, and they all take a different approach to teaching you how to fight. There isn't a right or wrong way – In my experience, you can't go wrong with Thunder Ranch, Shootrite, or Louis Awerbuck (YFA). Any of those will leave you capable of defending yourself or a loved one.

That said, as an analytical person, I really enjoy the approach Tom takes. Being stationed in the particularly violent city of Memphis, Tom's students have engaged in nearly 60 gunfights. Detailed analysis of a cross section of those shootings is provided throughout the class, and Tom's curriculum is constantly adapting to what they see in actual shootings. In the 4 years I've known him, Tom has changed a few things – a progressive curriculum is a sign that an instructor has an open mind as to what is best suited to HIS target audience. Some training schools are out to let you have a "Mancation" and play soldier – but what might be appropriate for Iraq may not apply in the mall parking lot or the ATM ("The salt licks of the suburban world" as Tom says). Therefore presentation from concealment, how to stand, how to move, when to shoot, where to shoot, how fast to shoot, what to do if the gun won't shoot – it is all a part of the class.

There is a lot of one handed shooting. Actual shootings and simulations show that if you are in a gun fight you are likely to get hit in the hands and arms, so you should practice strong hand only and weak hand only drills. We did that extensively.

Tom constantly changes targets to emphasize you shouldn't have a pre-conceived notion of what your target will look like, what you will have to shoot, or what will be available to be shot. This is not a "two to the chest, one to the head" experience – you will have to think about what you are doing and why you are doing it.

A phrase you will hear repeated is stress inoculation. Mr. Givens states emphatically that there is a timer at every gunfight, and the Grim Reaper presses the start and stop button. Time adds stress to the situation. Competition adds stress as well. You will have to complete a drill before the whistle. You will shoot against other students to see who will make a mistake first. We work on every type of drill on the clock, including drawing from concealment. Regarding concealment, we learn how to draw from several types.

Friday morning Mr. Givens goes through introductions and gives the safety lecture. Many people roll their eyes at the safety lecture, and inevitably they are the ones that need it the most. In my opinion, arrogance and complacency are more dangerous than ignorance – at least the ignorant might recognize it in themselves and proceed with caution. After a review of the four safety rules and what they really mean, we begin a discussion of nomenclature and what fighting with a handgun really means. This discussion will eventually include caliber, size, quality, and how you carry. Tom carries a Glock 35 and two extra magazines, and a back up gun beyond that every day. He dresses around it and makes the point that if your goal is to be able to protect yourself, your priority needs to be how you are going to organize your wardrobe



Tom explaining the birds and bees to Dawg23

Mr. Givens lectures on low light techniques and how the gun works in low light – specifically, the exact same way as during the day – line up the sights and press the trigger. The issue is in lower light tracking movement becomes difficult. Dusk is when “night” sights pay their rent. Aligning your sights is MUCH easier with a little tritium.

The class is issued dummy rounds to use in failure drills. Failure to fire, stovepipes and double feeds are addressed. The first clearance drill is the tap rack bang, or in Memphis, the “smack ‘em, jack ‘em, whack ‘em”. T-R-B can be done very quickly. There is a demonstration of how to clear

double feeds on the clock, and the methods take between 3.5 and 5 seconds. Since the “average” fight is over in that amount of time Mr. Givens suggests you run flat out to cover or concealment if experience a double feed so that you can clear it en route, once there, whatever - become a moving target, and get behind cover.

There is an excellent video portion of the mindset lecture. We watch and discuss three videos – the unfortunate experience of Deputy Dinkeller, a 60 minutes segment on Lance Thomas, and the FBI report on the Miami shootout. The details of these incidents provide critical food for thought.

The content of the class distills to two points –

- A) Your mindset, marksmanship and gun handling skills are all equally important when it comes to surviving a confrontation.
- B) You must be able to deploy a handgun capable of speed, power and accuracy to defeat an opponent.

Results are difficult to argue with – of the nearly 60 self defense confrontations Tom’s students have been engaged in, only two have lost the fight – and they were the only two that failed to have a gun on them when the fight occurred.

In other words, Rangemaster students

have a 100% track record if they have a firearm when the confrontation begins.

The more I have trained, the more I have come to believe that most of the things “gun guys” bicker about – caliber, stance, preferred gun – are irrelevant when compared to having training, a plan, and *a gun*.

Some of the other issues our class addressed that are commonly discussed...

Your Stance – Mr. Givens does not endorse Weaver or Iso. The preferred method is the “fighting stance”. Weak foot forward, lean into the target, etc.

Your Grip – You learn how to grip your gun regarding lateral and linear forces, where to put your extra digits, etc. We are encouraged to get our fingers WAY off the trigger when not on target, specifically to rest them on the slide. 1911 shooters are cautioned to keep thumbs on the safety and pointers off the slide stop pin.



One hand, weak hand, over and over.



Father and son - who can clean the plates faster?

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RANGEMASTER
2611 S. Mendenhall Rd.
Memphis, TN 38115-1503



Phone: 901-370-5600
Fax: 901-370-5699
Email: [rangemaster.tom@gmail](mailto:rangemaster.tom@gmail.com)



www.rangemaster.com

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The Draw – Weak hand to the solar plexus, strong hand on the gun with a firing grip while still in the holster. Bring the gun straight up, rotate 90 degrees into a retention position, punch out, bringing the weak hand onto the grip in the process, reach full extension. Holstering is the same in reverse.

Semi-auto manipulation – To load, unload, and clear malfunctions - take your weak hand and come over the top, grip the entire slide and rip it to the rear. You will not break your gun. This works on every semi auto every time... it is also a gross motor skill you should be able to handle under a lot of stress. Mr. Givens, Clint Smith, Louis Awerbuck and Tiger Mckee all advocate this technique without exception regardless of skill level.

Breathing- As long as you are doing it, how you are doing it is a non-issue for up close and personal encounters.

Mindset – Excellent presentation and reminders throughout the class. This class confirms that pistols are a notch above worthless. There is a discussion of projectile weight and velocity, anecdotes from personal experience, and video/discussion sections.

If you are in a gunfight, you might get shot. If you are shot with a handgun, you can probably function and keep fighting. Handguns are woefully underpowered, hence 80% of people shot with them survive.

If you carry a gun, you should realize that one day someone may force you to shoot them. You need decide a course of action long before you are faced with the situation.

Don't be polite, don't let people get close to you. It might get you killed. Criminals take advantage of our disposition to polite behavior. If you don't feel right about someone or a situation, say so and take a fighting posture. Let the opposition know without doubt you are a wolf, not sheep.

Tom and his crew will be back in Baton Rouge February of 2011. I can't emphasize how strongly I suggest anyone who wants a comprehensive overview of what it means to fight with a gun attend.